

UNDER PANT GARMENT COMFORT STRIP

TECHNICAL FIELD

The invention relates to clothing, and, more particularly, the invention
5 relates to under clothing.

STATEMENT OF A PROBLEM ADDRESSED BY THIS INVENTION

Interpretation Considerations

This section describes the technical field in more detail, and discusses
10 problems encountered in the technical field. This section does not describe prior
art as defined for purposes of anticipation or obviousness under 35 U.S.C. section
102 or 35 U.S.C. section 103. Thus, nothing stated in the Statement of a Problem
Addressed by This Invention is to be construed as prior art

15 *Discussion*

Thongs were introduced in about 1939 and their use has increased in
popularity ever since. Also, within the last two decades tight clothing has become
more popular and thongs help hide panty lines underneath tight clothing.

20 Unfortunately, users have a love / hate relationship with thongs. They
love the way thongs hide panty lines. However, they hate the discomfort caused

by thong creep. Thongs with narrow rear portions often wedge between the buttocks and irritate sensitive areas, such as skin within the natal cleft, and perineum. In addition to discomfort, thongs can also lead to discomfort and medical problems such as vaginal and urinary tract infections, irritation of the rectum, hemorrhoids, and tiny lacerations. Most of the more severe medical problems are caused by the narrow rear portion of a thong sliding back and forth spreading bacteria from the perianal region to the genital area.

SELECTED OVERVIEW OF SELECTED EMBODIMENTS

This invention provides technical advantages as a comfort strip that controls under pant garments from becoming wedged within the declivity formed by the buttocks. The comfort strip reduces discomfort and medical problems associated with under pant garment fabric chaffing and scratching against sensitive skin within the natal cleft, and perineum. Preferably, the comfort strip is generally trapezoidal in cross section with a vertical configuration when coupled to a thong, or alternatively comprises at least one horizontal strip. Either embodiment stops thong creep.

The vertical comfort strip comprises a top portion, a bottom portion, and a pair of opposing side portions. The top portion is adapted to conform to the natal cleft, or perineum, or both regions in part or whole. The bottom portion is

adapted to attach to an under pant garment. The bottom portion is coupled to the top portion via a pair of opposing side portions. The opposing side portions are, in one embodiment, symmetrical in shape. In one embodiment, the comfort strip may be a generally symmetrical wedge that is permanently attached to an under
5 pant garment via sewing. In an alternative embodiment, the comfort strip may be at least one removably attached horizontal bands adapted to attach to a rear portion of an under pant garment. Preferably, the comfort strip is composed of a semi-rigid material that has a “memory” to such that it retains its shape.

10 Of course, other features and embodiments of the invention will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. After reading the specification, and the detailed description of the exemplary embodiment, these persons will recognize that similar results can be achieved in not dissimilar ways. Accordingly, the detailed description is provided as an example of the best mode
15 of the invention, and it should be understood that the invention is not limited by the detailed description. Accordingly, the invention should be read as being limited only by the claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Various aspects of the invention, as well as at least one embodiment, are better understood by reference to the following **EXEMPLARY EMBODIMENT OF A BEST MODE**. To better understand the invention, the **EXEMPLARY EMBODIMENT OF A BEST MODE** should be read in conjunction with the drawings in which:

Figure 1 illustrates a comfort strip attached to an under pant garment;

Figure 2 illustrates a cross section of a comfort strip; and

Figure 3 illustrates a cross section of a comfort strip with flaps.

Figure 4a illustrates a side view of a horizontally placed comfort strip.

Figure 4b is a close-up comfort strip.

Figure 5a illustrates an exterior view of a comfort strip.

Figure 5b illustrates an interior view of a comfort strip.

Figure 6 illustrates a horizontally placed comfort strip.

AN EXEMPLARY EMBODIMENT OF A BEST MODE

Interpretation Considerations

When reading this section (An Exemplary Embodiment of a Best Mode, which describes an exemplary embodiment of the best mode of the invention, hereinafter “exemplary embodiment”), one should keep in mind several points. First, the following exemplary embodiment is what the inventor believes to be the best mode for practicing the invention at the time this patent was filed. Thus, since one of ordinary skill in the art may recognize from the following exemplary embodiment that substantially equivalent structures or substantially equivalent acts may be used to achieve the same results in exactly the same way, or to achieve the same results in a not dissimilar way, the following exemplary embodiment should not be interpreted as limiting the invention to one embodiment.

Likewise, individual aspects (sometimes called species) of the invention are provided as examples, and, accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art may recognize from a following exemplary structure (or a following exemplary act) that a substantially equivalent structure or substantially equivalent act may be used to either achieve the same results in substantially the same way, or to achieve the same results in a not dissimilar way.

Accordingly, the discussion of a species (or a specific item) invokes the genus (the class of items) to which that species belongs as well as related species in that genus. Likewise, the recitation of a genus invokes the species known in the art. Furthermore, it is recognized that as technology develops, a number of additional alternatives to achieve an aspect of the invention may arise. Such advances are hereby incorporated within their respective genus, and should be recognized as being functionally equivalent or structurally equivalent to the aspect shown or described.

Second, the only essential aspects of the invention are identified by the claims. Thus, aspects of the invention, including elements, acts, functions, and relationships (shown or described) should not be interpreted as being essential unless they are explicitly described and identified as being essential. Third, a function or an act should be interpreted as incorporating all modes of doing that function or act, unless otherwise explicitly stated (for example, one recognizes that “tacking” may be done by nailing, stapling, gluing, hot gunning, riveting, etc., and so a use of the word tacking invokes stapling, gluing, etc., and all other modes of that word and similar words, such as “attaching”). Fourth, unless explicitly stated otherwise, conjunctive words (such as “or”, “and”, “including”, or “comprising” for example) should be interpreted in the inclusive, not the exclusive, sense. Fifth, the words “means” and “step” are provided to facilitate

the reader's understanding of the invention and do not mean "means" or "step" as defined in §112, paragraph 6 of 35 U.S.C., unless used as "means for – functioning–" or "step for –functioning–" in the Claims section.

5 *Discussion of the Figures*

10 The invention can be characterized as a comfort strip for controlling under pant garments from becoming wedged within the declivity formed by the buttocks. Under pant garments include briefs, bloomers, thongs, and g-strings, for example. In a preferred embodiment, the comfort strip is generally trapezoidal in cross section and conforms to the region of the natal cleft and extends inferiorly along the natal cleft to the perianal region. In alternative embodiments, the comfort strip may conform to any portion of or the entire perineum region solely, or in conjunction with any portion of or an entire portion of the natal cleft. The comfort strip is composed of a semi-rigid material that has a "memory" to retain its shape.

20 Features and advantages of the invention can be better understood by reviewing Figure 1, which illustrates a comfort strip 100 for controlling an under pant garment 110 from becoming wedged within the declivity formed by the buttocks 120. Under pant garments 110 may be any type of garment worn underneath an outer garment such as pants, shorts, or skirt for example.

The natal cleft 130 is the declivity formed by the buttocks 120. The perineum 150 is the lower most portion of the trunk and extends between the anus and the genitalia. In a preferred embodiment, a bottom portion (shown below) of the comfort strip 100 may be secured to an under pant garment 110, the top portion of the comfort strip 100 may conform to the superior region of the natal cleft 130 and extend inferiorly along the natal cleft 130 to the perianal region 140. In an alternative embodiment, the comfort strip 100 top portion may conform to a region of the perineum 150. The comfort strip 100 is adapted to conform to a body region or a portion of a body region such as the natal cleft 130, perineum 150, or both for example. Accordingly, the comfort strip 100 may comprise a semi-rigid material that has a “memory” to retain its shape.

Figure 2 illustrates a cross section of a comfort strip 200. In a preferred embodiment, the cross section of a comfort strip 200 is generally trapezoidal. In alternative embodiments, the cross section of the comfort strip 200 may be generally triangular, generally half-moon, or irregular in shape, for example.

The comfort strip 200 has a top portion 230, a bottom portion 240, and a pair of opposing side portions 250. The top portion 230 is coupled to the bottom portion 240 via a pair of opposing side portions 250. In a preferred embodiment,

the top portion 230 is narrower than the bottom portion 240 and the opposing side portions 250 are generally symmetrical in shape. The top portion 230 is adapted to conform to a body region or a portion of a body region such as the natal cleft 260, perineum (not shown), or both for example. Preferably, the top portion 230 is adapted to conform to the superior region of the natal cleft 260. The bottom portion 240 is adapted to couple to an under pant garment 210. In a preferred embodiment, the bottom portion 240 of a comfort strip 200 may be permanently attached to an under pant garment 210 via sewing, for example. Alternatively, the bottom portion 240 of a comfort strip 200 may be permanently attached to an under pant garment via adhesive or integral formation (such as a pocket), for example. In an additional alternative embodiment, the bottom portion 240 of a comfort strip 200 may removably attach to a portion of an under pant garment 210 via Velcro, or other material as is readily apparent to those skilled in the art.

Figure 3 is a cross sectional view of a comfort strip 300 with flaps 360, and is attachable to an under pant garment 310. The comfort strip 300 has a top portion 330, a bottom portion 340, a pair of opposing side portions 350, the pair of flaps 360 each extending respectively from an opposing side portion 350. The top portion 330 is coupled to the bottom portion 340 via the opposing side portions 350. The top portion 330 is adapted to conform to a body region, or a

portion of a body region such as the natal cleft 390, perineum (not shown), or both, for example.

Preferably, the top portion 330 is adapted to conform to the superior
 5 region of the natal cleft 390. The bottom portion 350 is adapted to couple to an
 under pant garment 310. A pair of flaps 360 each extending respectively from an
 opposing side portion 350 each having a top surface 370 and a bottom surface
 380. The pair of flaps 360 wrap around the rear portion of an under pant garment
 310. The pair of flaps 360 enables a comfort strip 300 to be securely attached to
 10 any under pant garment and to be removed prior to the under pant garment being
 washed. In a preferred embodiment, the bottom surface 380 has a fastening
 means for securing a comfort strip 300 to an under pant garment 310 via a flap
 360. The bottom surface 380 is parallel to the bottom portion 340. Additionally,
 the bottom surface 380 may secure a comfort strip 300 to an under pant garment
 15 310 via an adhesive. In alternative embodiment, a bottom surface 380 may secure
 a comfort strip 300 to an under pant garment 310 via Velcro. Furthermore, a top
 surface 370 could secure a flap 360 to an under pant garment 310.

Figure 4 illustrates a side view of an alternative embodiment of a
 20 horizontally placed comfort strip 400 adapted to attach to an under pant garment
 410. The comfort strip is a horizontally placed flat strip that is adapted to attach

to a rear portion of an under pant garment 410. In a preferred embodiment, at least one strip may be placed horizontally on the opposite surface of an under pant garment 410 that faces the perianal region 420. Preferably, the thin horizontal strip has a top portion 430, a bottom portion 440, and opposing side portions 450.

5 The top portion 430 faces the interior surface of an outer garment 460, such as pants, shorts, or a skirt, for example. The bottom portion 440 may be adapted to attach to the surface of an under pant garment 410 that faces an outer garment 460. In a preferred embodiment, the bottom portion 440 may be adapted to removably attach via silicon, Velcro, or adhesive, for example. In another
10 embodiment, the comfort strip 400 may be integrally formed within a rear portion of an under pant garment 410. Furthermore, the top portion 430 and the bottom portion 440 may be equal in size and shape and the length of the comfort strip 400 shall not exceed the width of the rear portion of the under pant garment 410.

15 In another alternative embodiment, the comfort strip may have flaps (not shown) that extend the top portion 430 and the bottom portion 440 length such that it is greater than the width of the rear portion of an under pant garment 410. In this embodiment, these flaps may be adapted to removably attach a horizontally placed comfort strip to a rear portion of an under pant garment 410.
20 Of course, it would be readily apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that alternative embodiments may include more than one comfort strip 400 placed in

any portion of a region, or in any region in entirety controlling a under pant garment 410 from becoming wedge within the declivity formed by the buttocks.

Figure 5a illustrates an interior view of a comfort strip 500 adapted to be horizontally placed on a rear portion of an under pant garment. The comfort strip 500 comprises an exterior portion, an interior portion 510 having an attaching means 530, and two opposing side portions 520. In one embodiment, the comfort strip 500 may comprise at least one fold 550 for attaching the comfort strip 500 to an under pant garment located in any portion of the comfort strip 500, however, it is most preferred to be located in about a center portion. Furthermore, the fold 550 may be predefined in a location by a perforation that is created during the manufacturing process. In an alternative embodiment, more than one fold 550 may be located on the comfort strip 500.

Figure 5b illustrates an exterior view of a comfort strip 500 adapted to be horizontally placed on a rear portion of an under pant garment (meaning that figure 5b shows the portion of the strip forming the exterior of the strip when using the strip). In a preferred embodiment, a small array of a non-stick material 540 may be incorporated directly onto the surface of the comfort strip exterior portion to increase stability and reduce discomfort, such as rubbing and chaffing against sensitive skin, for example. Preferably, the non-stick material is located

about the edges of the strip. In addition, the non-stick material may be incorporated in an artistic presentation such that it represents a logo, character, or shape, for example.

5 The attaching means 530 may be any means that removably attaches a comfort strip 500 to an under pant garment, such as silicon, Velcro, or adhesive, for example. In a preferred embodiment, wherein a single fold 550 is centrally located on a comfort strip 500, at least one attaching means 530 may be located on either side of the single fold 550. In an alternative embodiment, wherein a
10 single fold 550 is centrally located on a comfort strip 500, a continuous attaching means 530 may extend from one side of comfort strip 500 to an alternative side of a comfort strip across the bottom portion 510. In yet another embodiment, more than two fastening means 530 may be found on the bottom portion 510 of a comfort strip 500. In this embodiment, the fastening means 530 may be an array
15 of adhesive dots in an artistic arrangement, for example, such that each dot is variable in shape and size.

Figure 6 illustrates a rear view of a preferred embodiment of a comfort strip 600 adapted to horizontally attached to an under pant garment 610.
20 Preferably, the comfort strip 600 is adapted to removably attach to a rear portion of an under pant garment 610 via a fastening means 620. In addition, the comfort

strip 600 has a perforated fold 630 that is centrally located. Furthermore, the comfort strip 600 is folded along the perforated fold 630 such that the fastening means 630 removably attaches the comfort strip 600 to an under pant garment 610 within the perianal region 640. In this embodiment, the comfort strip 600
5 'sandwiches' the anterior and posterior surface of a rear portion of an under pant garment 610 that is within the perianal region 640.

Thus, though the invention has been described with respect to a specific preferred embodiment, many variations and modifications will become apparent
10 to those skilled in the art upon reading the present application. It is therefore the intention that the appended claims be interpreted as broadly as possible in view of the prior art to include all such variations and modifications.